Latin in the late 1920's, and again from Latin to Cyrillic ten years later), the impounding of religious texts, including the Qur'an, and the total cessation of all publication of a religious nature. These antireligious policies would of themselves make an active religious life most difficult.

The interviews, however, indicate that equally important in hampering the religious life of Central Asian Islam are forces not directly connected with the Communist antireligious policies, such as the general impoverishment of the population, which compels the inhabitants to devote all their time and energies to attain bare survival, and leaves little freedom for time-consuming actions required by religion; the shortage of animals used in certain Muslim festivals; and the requirements of a highly dynamic society, geared primarily for production and not for the satisfaction of the needs of its citizens. If, despite such formidable difficulties, Islamic practices have not altogether vanished from Central Asia, the reason must be sought both in the great hold which this religion exercises on its followers (Bartold had once observed that history knows many cases of mass conversion *to* Islam, but not a single instance of a society being converted *from* Islam), and the secondary role of leaders and institutions in that religion; the latter factor permits Muslims, like the Jews, to survive better under extreme oppression than other religions for which the clergy, the hierarchy, the supreme spiritual authority are essential.

One of the most important — perhaps the single most important — element in the Muslim ritual are the five daily prayers. This practice seems to have declined among Soviet Muslims to such an extent as to have all but vanished. The principal cause for its disappearance is the inability of Soviet Muslims to take time off from work in order to recite the prayers; such stoppage of work is considered "economic sabotage" and involves serious retribution. The fact that since the 1930's Friday — the day of rest and public prayer — is considered a regular working day in Central Asia prevents the adult population from engaging in communal worship as well. The only times of the day when a Muslim may perform his prayers undisturbed occur at sunrise and at sunset — the first and the last of the daily prayers; that is, when he is at home, with his family. This is the reason why, to the extent that the daily prayer is observed at all, it survives largely among that part of the population which is not gainfully employed: above all, the women and the elders.

The younger generation is further handicapped by its ignorance of the prayers. Only a few of the refugees interviewed knew how to perform the regular daily prayers; none of those belonged to the younger generation. It may also be added that not one of these refugees had cared to learn the prayers since his arrival in the West.

Another important duty of Muslims is to observe daytime fasting during the entire 28 days of the month of Ramazan. Prior to 1917 the fast was

5: Pipes S-4 (1953) 1955 RL1 Turkestan RL1

782 796 177 233 *sovkhozy* (state farms) — four-fifths, according to the Soviet Encyclopedia — which do not release them for religious purposes, but the over-all number of sheep and goats in Turkestan has declined from 3 per native in 1913 to approximately 1.5 per native in 1938. Compromises and subterfuges are resorted to to overcome this difficulty. In some collective farms the sheep are stolen or slaughtered under one pretext or another, often with the tacit acquiescence of the collective's chairman. In the cities, the well-to-do purchase sheep on the free market, while the less affluent either enter into partnerships with other families to purchase and divide one ram, or else, if they are even too poor for that, sacrifice a chicken instead. The *kurban bayram* seems to be observed less publicly than in pre-Revolutionary years, and usually only in the circle of the immediate family, "with the windows shut and the doors locked," as several refugees put it.

735 177 The third fundamental Muslim duty is that of regular alms giving, known as *zakat*, traditionally set at 2.5 percent of earnings. In Central Asia the *zakat* had lost even before the Russian conquest in the 19th century the character of a purely philanthropic measure, having been transformed into a *de facto* tax, collected for the benefit of the local secular authorities. The tsarist administration did its best to suppress this practice in territories under its control, replacing it with its own system of taxes. Today, nothing seems to remain of the *zakat* in Soviet Central Asia. The practice had no deep roots to begin with; the population is too impoverished to keep it up; and there is no one to collect it. Almost none of the refugees even knew the meaning of the term *zakat*, and upon being informed, denied ever seeing it practiced.

788 177 Finally, there is the obligation of performing the pilgrimage to Mecca, the *hajj*. Of all the duties incumbent upon a Musim this is the one most difficult to fulfill under Soviet conditions, inasmuch as the regime forbids travel of private citizens abroad for any purpose whatsoever. Occasionally, as in 1953, the Soviet government itself dispatches to Mecca official delegations headed by government-appointed muftis and shaykhs, but it is quite obvious that such delegations consist only of carefully screened individuals, liberally interspersed with employees of the security police, and that their primary purpose is not religion but foreign propaganda. For the private individual, the road to Mecca is barred. It appears, however, that pilgrimages to the graves of local saints continue to be popular, and in some sense may serve as a substitute for the forbidden *hajj*.

Thus, of the four practices which constitute the central elements of the Islamic ritual, the five Pillars of the Faith (the fifth being the profession of faith), one (prayer) is almost entirely neglected by the younger and middle-age groups, one (fasting) is observed rarely and even then imperfectly, and two (*zakat* and *hajj*) have completely disappeared. Religious *ritual* thus may be said to have declined considerably and no longer